

# Blog Uses and Applications

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## Content Overview

1. What is a blog? means “Web log”—is an online, chronological collection of personal commentary and links. Easy to create and use from anywhere with an Internet connection.



## Content Overview

2. What is a videoblog? A videoblog, or vlog, is a Web log (blog) that uses video rather than text or audio as its primary media source.
3. Who is blogging? Hundreds of millions of people.



## Content Overview

4. Why instructors use: Keep students up-to-date, extend course beyond class (blending), make course more interactive and personal, etc. Fosters student reflection on content—a content and course focus.



## Content Overview

### 5. Pros and Cons.

- Pros: quick, flexible, ownership, can determine student thinking, can lead to a writing portfolio, etc.
- Cons: Takes time, not confidential, another tool to learn, a lot to read, etc.



## Content Overview

### 6. Theoretical rationale: Blogging links to research on metacognition and the social construction of knowledge—reflect, negotiate ideas, and respond to the ideas of others.



## Content Overview

### 6. Theoretical rationale continued: Feedback is also possible on blog posts. Sharing is also a key component. Video blogging links to dual coding theory.



## Univ. of Maryland Baltimore County

...chemistry labs had groups of students posting their findings to a blog and receiving feedback from other students, the average passing rate in class went from 71.2 percent to 85.6 percent.



## David Wiley (BYU)

**"A group of approximately 60 people from around the world who read, worked, wrote, and discussed together – and fewer than 10 of them were registered for credit at my university."**



## David Wiley (BYU)

**"When the costs of "open teaching" are so low, I ask myself a question. Do we professors, who live rather privileged lives relative to the vast majority of the planet's population, have a moral obligation to make our teaching efforts as broadly impactful as possible, reaching out to bless the lives of as many people as we can? Especially when participatory technologies make it so inexpensive (almost free) for us to do so?"**



Open Teaching in a Digital Age

'Openness' as the default  
action of the academic?

## David Wiley (BYU)

**"The added richness of broader, international perspectives that these outside, informal students brought to the course was priceless for the official students in my class. And there were huge learning benefits for the informal participants as well."**



## Content Overview

7. How instructors use: Course announcements, task reminders, posting resources, and general course communication. Might also use to communicate with those teaching similar courses. They might also network with others.



## Content Overview

8. How students use: post article reflections, dialogue, draft ideas for projects, collaborate across institutions or cultures, compose a summary of course learning or a blog on blog, respond to peers on their ideas, etc.



## Content Overview



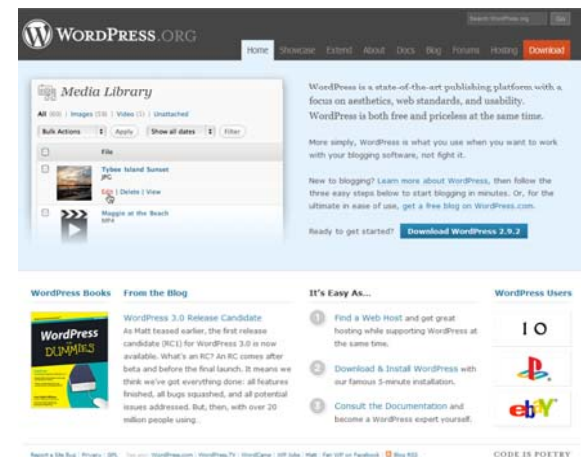
9. Blogging tools possible (Movable Type, WordPress, Blogger, LiveJournal, Twitter, etc.)
10. What to share: text, hyperlinks, images, multimedia, etc. Others can post comments.



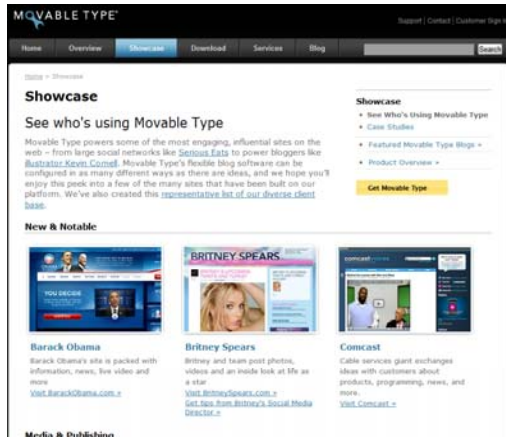
## Blogger (from Google)



## Word Press (an open source project)



## Movable Type (a more professional publishing platform)



## Xanga (a huge community)



## Tumblr (a feature rich system)



## Posterous (simple with much functionality)



**Soup.io** (scrapbook—a personal remix of the web just click and add, easy to include multimedia, and lifestream—aggregates all you create online )



**Edmodo** (effectively makes password protected groups of blogs; polling, instant messaging, mobile access, class calendars, etc.)



## Content Overview

11. Twitter posts are for micro-blogging (short 140 or less character text messages): instructors might post course announcements, resources, events, share lesson plans, extend or reduce office hours, etc.



## Content Overview

12. Twitter for students: might follow professors, follow experts, ask questions of instructors, follow conference events, find industry leaders, etc.  
13. Grading blog posts: quantitative and qualitative options.





## Twitter (microblogging)



## Content Overview

14. Trackback notifies bloggers when one of their posts is referenced by another blog, making it possible to determine the popularity of a post based on the number and diversity of incoming links to a post.



## Content Overview

- 15. Caution: Students might post inappropriate content.
- 16. Meta-tagging blog and videoblog postings will help people find them more easily.



## Content Overview

17. Blogging power comes in personal publishing as well as hyperlinking to other blogs.



## Examples of Blogging

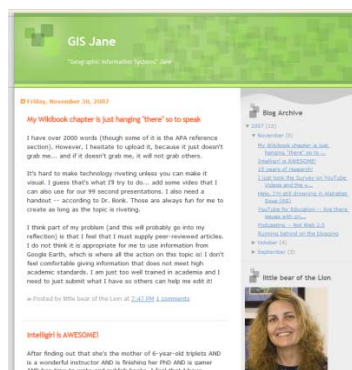
1. Instructor course blogs.
2. Student blogs on content.
3. Blogs with critical friend feedback.
4. Team blogs.
5. Language learning blogs.
6. Cross-cultural blogs.



## Instructor Cross-Cultural Blog



## Critical Friend Blogs

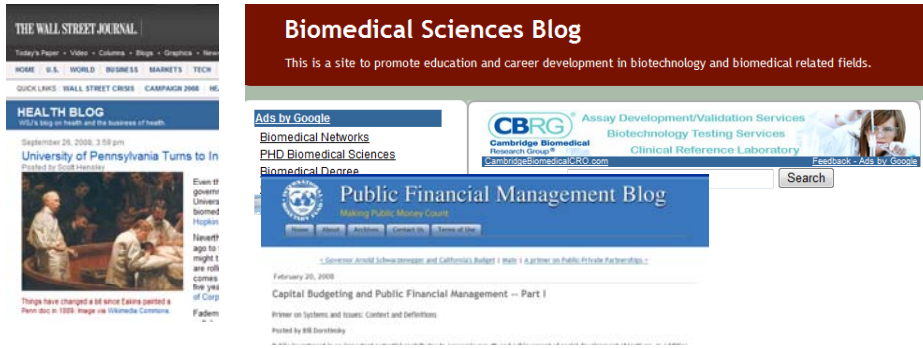


## Read Language Blogs (e.g., "The Spanish Blog")





## Discipline Specific Blogs



## Other Blogging Activities

6. Write "super summaries" of blogs.
7. Expand blog posts into papers.
8. Blog competitions.
9. Archive blogs for later years.
10. Bring blog posts to class.

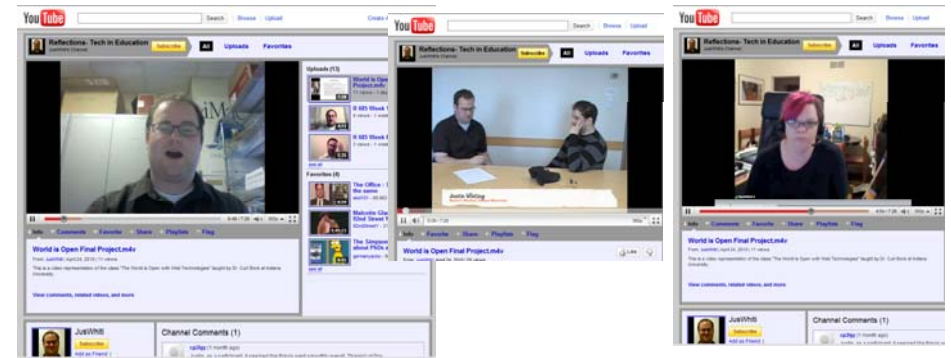


## Other Blogging Activities

11. Assign students to do video blogs (vlogs)



## Vlogs (Blogs with video)



## Advice and Guidelines

1. Create scaffold for any blogging collaboration. Include instructions and procedures to avoid offensive or inappropriate content (e.g., Netiquette).



## Advice and Guidelines

2. Be sure that students receive feedback on their blog posts.
3. Instructors might not read every blog post, but, instead, read and grade student super summaries of their blogging reflections.



## Advice and Guidelines

4. Perhaps assign students to read a particular blog each week.
5. If it is a blended class, have students bring in their blog transcripts with key concepts circled for discussion.



## Advice and Guidelines

6. If you are using discussion forums, ask students to include blog comments in them.
7. Consider having students subscribe to the blog feeds of others or create an RSS feed on their blog.



## Advice and Guidelines

8. Allow students to select the blog tool that they will use.
9. Post sample blogs from prior students (with permission).
10. Post testimonials from students.



## Advice and Guidelines

11. Model blogging procedures as the instructor.
12. Praise exemplary bloggers.
13. You might set minimum or maximum blog posting guidelines.



## Advice and Guidelines

14. Videoblog postings of 3 minutes or less might be best.
15. Most blogs are social, but can be used or analyzed for educational purposes. There are dozens (if not thousands) of expert blogs for nearly any educational discipline.



## How might you blog?

For More Information, Contact:

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